THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir. This conversion has not been considered justified.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The work has not been approved.

Free and cheap drugs for common man

*113. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to make available free and cheap drugs to the common man;

(b) if so, what are the names of the States which are likely to be covered under this scheme;

(c) what annual expenditure is likely to be incurred for the purpose; and

(d) whether Government propose to increase the Budget allocation under this Head?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) to (d) Supply of drugs to the needy patients is arranged by State Government|Union Territory Administrations through hospitals, dispensaries and Primary Health Centres|sub-centres. State Governments have their own programme and criteria for supply of medicines through different health institutions subject to availability of financial resources. During the Seventh Five-Year Plan, out of a total outlay of Rs. 2495.55 crores for Health sector, an amount of Rs. 1063.35 crores is meant for establishment of health institutions in rural areas and includes the cost of supply of drugs. From Central Government an amount of Rs. 2000|- per annum is provided for supply of drugs to each health sub-centre established during the Sixth Plan and later. An amount of Rs. 6000|- per annum is also provided to each Primary Health Centre covered under the Village Health Guide Scheme.

Children born blind

*114. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey to find out the number of children who are born blind during the last 3 years; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) No specific survey to find out the number of children born blind has been undertaken.

(b) Does not arise.

Setting up of electronic automatic exchanges

*115. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the names of the cities in the country where electronic automatic exchanges are proposed to be installed during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.